

STORIES OF IRISH WIT AND HUMOR

BY SEUMAS MAC MANUS.

(Editor's Note—On St. Patrick's Day, last year, there appeared on this page "Six Irish Stories," erroneously attributed to the Irish poet, novelist and lecturer, Seumas MacManus. Mr. MacManus has protested against this attribution, as he has long kept up a vigorous fight against this type of "Irish humor." His writings in the leading magazines, in books and in his lectures are of practical illustration of the genuine type of Irish wit, humor and story telling.

We are glad to publish on this St. Patrick's Day the following article on



this subject by Mr. MacManus with typical stories of Irish humor selected by him. We believe that the false impression made by the previous error as to authorship can be best shown by this article from Mr. MacManus' pen.)

There's a type of American joke-smith (more correctly jackass) who will perpetrate "Irish humor" for his fellows to hee-haw at—and who assumes that the people who are admittedly the keenest and brightest on the world's ridge are one-half butts

and one-half blunderers—that an Irishman cannot open his mouth without putting both his feet in it—that, with the face of a baboon, he talks in baboonish jargon and that the real recipe for producing "Irish dialect" is to make hash of the English language, salt the dish with a sufficiency of "shure an's" and pepper-dust it with a plentiful sprinkling of "Ol," "yez," "bhoy," "praste" and "Be jabbers."

Under my name a year ago, such a gentleman set down here "Six best Irish stories" that were particularly vile. To take the bad taste off the mouth of those who swallowed last year's, I offer the following genuine and average samples of true Irish wit and humor:

I.

A fair specimen of sardonic Irish humor was that quoted by Mr. Taft while he was still displacing sixty cubic feet of White House atmosphere. Some one asked him what his favorite joke was, and he said that no joke tickled him like the old one—the bit of dialogue passing between the bar-man in the bar and his Irish boss in the back room:

"Is Murphy good for a drink?"

"Has he got it?"

"He has."

"He is."

II.

And the driest of the dry Irish wit was well exemplified in a story told to me recently by William Allen White, who put the sass in Kansas. When in Ireland some years ago recklessly searching out ancestral records, he, strolling one afternoon through the beautiful Phoenix Park in Dublin, was both amused and amazed at sight of three burly Dublin policemen striving to run down a spindly, sickly, ragged little urchin who was putting his puffing pursuers out of breath. Mr. White, turning to a seedy, serious-looking old fellow buried in a newspaper on one of the park benches,